



The President's Daily Brief

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ISRAEL

Defense Minister Moshe Dayan has apparently abandoned his earlier insistence on rectification of Egyptian violations of the standstill agreement as an essential prerequisite for renewing the Jarring talks. Without mentioning Egyptian missiles in the standstill zone, Dayan in a speech yesterday said, "I am very much in favor of our participation in the Jarring talks in order to achieve peace, despite the fact that I am well aware that this means a dive into some very cold water indeed."

Dayan's apparent switch may in part be related to the quiet maneuvering for position now under way between the top contenders to succeed Prime Minister Golda Meir, even though few observers expect Mrs. Meir to step down voluntarily before the end of the current Knesset term in the fall of 1973. Having almost certainly boosted his strong public image and popularity by his earlier hard line on the Jarring talks, Dayan may now think that he can afford some compromise on this issue. His consciousness of Israel's dependence on the US for support is probably also partly responsible for his change in position.

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CAMBODIA

In his first of a series of periodic reviews of the military situation, Ambassador Swank makes the following points:

--Enemy strengths, dispositions, and capabilities do not appear to have changed significantly in recent weeks, and Communist activity has increasingly taken on a defensive character as the Cambodian Army (FANK) has launched several offensive operations.

--The lull in the fighting may be due to enemy pre-occupation with higher priorities or to logistics, communications, intelligence and other problems.

--It is still most difficult to determine the strength of Cambodian Communist units. Reports of friction between certain of these units and the Vietnamese Communists are becoming more numerous, however.

--FANK expects intensified Communist activity during the dry season, but its gains in equipment, training, and battle experience should enable it to perform creditably in the months ahead. FANK morale and confidence remain high.

--Lon Nol is aware of the probable limits of US assistance, but he understandably keeps pressing for accelerated deliveries of as much aid as possible. His revised strategy and plan for army expansion are conceptually sound but, in terms of prospective US support, still too ambitious.

--As a result of the President's cease-fire initiatives, Lon Nol is anxious to establish a government presence as deep in enemy-occupied or contested areas of Cambodia as he can. He still intends to continue the overland drive to Kompong Thom.

On the political front, Cheng Heng reportedly told journalists in Phnom Penh yesterday that the government would not accept a coalition government which included Cambodian Communists or pro-Sihanouk elements. He also said that Cambodia does not consider itself tied to an Indochina-wide cease-fire, but that it would consider a cease-fire in which North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops were withdrawn immediately. There has as yet been no official US Embassy confirmation of Heng's remarks.

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CAMBODIA-VIETNAM

Communications intelligence indicates that a battalion of the North Vietnamese 28th Regiment, subordinate to the Communist B-3 Front in South Vietnam's western highlands, has moved to a position north of Stung Treng in northeast Cambodia. This puts it near Route 13 and in the same area where another B-3 Front unit, the 24th Regiment, has been stationed for some time. Elements of another regiment, the 66th, which normally operates in the Laos - South Vietnam - Cambodian triborder area, have not been heard in communications recently and may be relocating, possibly also into Cambodia. The purpose of such moves would be to increase the security of the enemy's vital communications lines through northeast Cambodia.

According to Cambodian officials, known casualties from a terrorist bombing incident on 7 November in a Phnom Penh theater are 23 civilians killed and 46 wounded. This appears to be the most serious act of Communist terrorism in the capital since the fighting began.

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